

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 12, 2019

Lieutenant General Todd T. Semonite
Chief of Engineers
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Headquarters
441 G St. NW
Washington, DC 20314

Dear Lieutenant General Semonite,

I write on behalf of stakeholder groups and communities throughout the Upper Susquehanna River Basin in the Southern Tier, including the Broome County Flood Task Force, regarding the Army Corps of Engineers' and New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's Upper Susquehanna River Basin ("Basin"), New York State Comprehensive Flood Damage Reduction Feasibility Study ("Study"). The Upper Susquehanna River Basin is a fundamental part of New York State's water infrastructure as it drains over 4,500 miles in the south central part of the state. Given the Basin's significance, recent flood disasters and the many communities impacted by potential future flooding, I strongly advocated for this Study and I write now to request the Army Corps Of Engineers extend their July finalization deadline to ensure that impacted local communities have adequate time to review the Study and are given ample opportunity to offer crucial feedback.

The Southern Tier faced catastrophic floods in 2006 and 2011, causing disastrous and irreversible harm to many homes, business, and communities throughout the region. This Study is an imperative step in identifying the realistic, impactful and long-term solutions to minimize the impact of rain and flood events in the Basin. The Study is also a way to recommend infrastructural and policy solutions to minimize the damage to life and property Southern Tier residents faced in 2006 and 2011. Although I commend the work the Army Corps has done thus far, and the efforts to involve local partners in the advancement of this initiative, I am deeply concerned that draft recommendations fail to identify enough impactful actions over a broad enough area to achieve the desired flood mitigation policy goals. For this reason, and others, it is vital that local leaders, stakeholders, advocacy groups and others have maximum time to review the Plan now and offer comments, with the goal of improving the final product, and setting a course that is most likely to lead to the creation of impactful flood mitigation policies and infrastructure.

Given the importance of the Study and its potential long-term impacts on many Southern Tier communities and the environment, it is imperative that the local communities and their representatives be given ample opportunity to review the full draft of the Study and supporting documentation prior to its conclusion. Community leaders and residents are concerned that the

findings and potential recommendations are unlikely to provide future protection from the devastation they sustained multiple times and wish to have full opportunity to impact the recommendations. Therefore, I write to request an extension of the July 8, 2019 deadline in order to allot local communities and officials sufficient time to review and comment on the full draft of the Study and corresponding data. Due to the many lives impacted by the 2006 and 2011 floods, it's vital that the victims of those floods, many of whom are still recovering, and their representatives are given ample time to review the draft plan. I encourage Army Corps to make community involvement and feedback throughout the planning process a top priority in order to ensure that the voices of residents are fully heard and accurately represented.

Thank you for your consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact me or my Regional Director for the Southern Tier, Amanda Spellicy, at 607-772-6792.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Charles E. Schumer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Charles" and last name "Schumer" clearly legible.

Charles. E Schumer
United States Senator